

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 are pending in this application. By this amendment, claims 1 and 13 are amended.

On September 21, applicants representative, David Zibelli, conducted a telephone interview concerning this application. Claim 1 was discussed in relation to the applied prior art, Hirano. In particular, Mr. Zibelli pointed out that in Hirano, the wires 53A and 53B are located on a side of the engine, not behind the engine with respect to a vehicle longitudinal direction as required by claim 1. Reference was particularly made to the side view of FIG. 4 of Hirano which shows the wires on a side of the engine.

The Examiner asserted that the vehicle longitudinal direction could be either from the front to the back of the vehicle or from the back to the front of the vehicle. Mr. Zibelli pointed out that the specification defines in paragraph 0033 the right side of FIG. 1 as a rear side of the longitudinal direction of the vehicle, and that one of ordinary skill in the art would understand the recitation of claim 1 of “behind the engine with respect to a vehicle longitudinal direction”. However, the Examiner maintained his position that behind the engine with respect to a vehicle longitudinal direction as required by claim 1 could mean to the left or to the right of the engine 2 in FIG. 2 of Hirano.

Accordingly, it was suggested to amend claim 1 to recite “at least one high voltage wire which is routed ~~behind~~ between the engine ~~with respect to a vehicle longitudinal direction and a passenger cabin of the hybrid vehicle~~”, as now recited in claim 1. The Examiner indicated that he would reconsider whether this language may define over Hirano.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-14 under 35 USC 103 over Hirano (US Pat. 6,460,642) in view of Sakurai (JP 2004 104918). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 of the application recites “at least one high voltage wire which is routed between the engine and a passenger cabin of the hybrid vehicle”. In Hirano, the wire 53A is not routed

between the engine and a passenger cabin of the hybrid vehicle, but is instead routed on the side of the engine, between the engine and a side of the vehicle. See FIGs. 2-4, for example. As may be seen particularly with reference to the side view of Fig. 4, the wire 53A runs downward from electric terminal 52A, and if anything, towards a front of the vehicle.

In Hirano, the high voltage wire is instead on the side of the engine 2, between the engine 2 and a side of the vehicle. As Hirano states, "it is easy to lay the high power cable in the narrow space alongside the engine." It is further noted, that in the previous office action, the Examiner correctly stated "Hirano fails to show the wire routed behind the engine in the vehicle longitudinal direction."

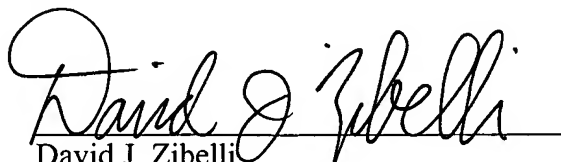
Accordingly, claim1, and all claims dependent therefrom, are not anticipated by Hirano. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

In view of the above, Applicant's submit that the application is in condition for allowance. Prompt consideration and allowance are solicited.

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at (202) 220-4200 to discuss any information concerning this application.

The Office is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or § 1.17 or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-0600.

Respectfully submitted,


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